



JOINT LEGISLATIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

January 16, 2014

Room 544 Legislative Office Building

The Joint Legislative Emergency Management Oversight Committee met on Thursday, January 16, 2014 at 9:30 AM in Room 544 of the Legislative Office Building. Members present were: Senator Dan Soucek, Senator Andrew Brock, Senator Kathy Harrington, Senator Ronald Rabin, Senator Norman Sanderson, Representative John Faircloth, Representative James Boles, Jr., Representative Garland Pierce, Representative Jason Saine, Representative Michael Speciale and Representative Roger Younts.

Senator Dan Soucek presided.

Chairman Soucek called the meeting to order at 9:36AM and recognized House Chairman Faircloth, who greeted the Committee.

Senator Sanderson was then recognized for a motion to adopt the minutes from the November 14, 2013 meeting. The motion passed.

Chairman Soucek then called on Sharon Stewart for a presentation on the Division of Emergency Programs at the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (see attachment 1).

Following her overview presentation, Senator Sanderson was recognized and queried whether the Division's emergency phone number was permanently available and asked how it was publicized.

Ms. Stewart replied that the emergency line is available at all times and that the division does its best to educate the public on its availability.

Mike Sprayberry of the Division of Emergency Management in the Department of Public Safety (DPS) was then recognized for a presentation on the Division's funding (see attachment 2).

Following the presentation, Chairman Soucek recognized Representative Faircloth, who asked how funding to counties was distributed.

Mr. Sprayberry answered that there is a formula based on population, risk and the ability to deal with contingencies.



Senator Sanderson then was recognized and queried whether local hazmat teams had any coordination with area military units.

Mr. Sprayberry replied that some local jurisdictions had their own agreements with the military commanding officer.

Chairman Soucek then recognized Senator Rabin who asked how official disasters were determined.

Mr. Sprayberry responded that data on the event is submitted to the relevant decision makers on whether to declare a disaster emergency.

Mike Hodgson was then called on to present an overview of VIPER (see attachment 3).

Following the presentation, Chairman Soucek recognized Senator Rabin who asked whether the VIPER system was hardened against electromagnetic interference.

Mr. Hodgson answered that it was hardened as much as possible.

Senator Sanderson was then recognized and asked about the causes of VIPER downtime.

Mr. Hodgson stated that most downtime is due to natural events such as wind, but emphasized that the system was designed with the best possible redundancy.

Julie Casani was then recognized for a presentation on the Division of Public Health's public health preparedness programs (see attachment 4).

As there were no questions following the presentation, Chairman Soucek called on Zachary Kendall in the Division of Adult Corrections of DPS for a presentation on inmate work crew capabilities (see attachment 5).

Following the presentation, Chairman Soucek recognized Senator Sanderson, who asked why the community work program had been cut.

Mr. Kendall responded that it was the Department's decision that the program was not "mission-critical" and so was cut as part of a flex-cut in a bad budget year.

Representative Faircloth was recognized and asked whether local governments could participate financially.

Chairman Soucek recognized Kristine Leggett of the General Assembly's Fiscal Research Division, who responded that in 2009 that very idea was proposed to local governments and they did not want to pay for the inmate labor.



Senator Brock was then recognized and shared his observation that the inmate work crews seem to enjoy the program. He asked how crews were used in and around State agencies.

Mr. Kendall responded that they were used in such a manner quite often. They have been used to clean up State beaches, maintenance of State buildings and at State museums.

Chairman Soucek recognized Representative Speciale who asked about the fee that would have been charged to local governments for the inmate labor.

Ms. Leggett responded that the fee would be \$150 per day, which does not cover the cost. Mr. Kendall concurred stating that the actual cost is a minimum of \$230 per day.

Representative Boles was recognized and asked about the cost of the entire program before it was cut.

Mr. Kendall responded that the program cost was between \$4.5 million and \$5 million.

Chairman Soucek then called on Ben Stanley of the General Assembly's Legislative Drafting Division who stated that the authority to charge local governments \$150 per day is still in existing law and could be utilized at any time.

Lee Stocks was then called on to present an overview of the work of the American Red Cross in North Carolina (see attachment 6).

Following his presentation, Chairman Soucek called on Gaylon Moss, the Disaster Relief Director and Volunteerism Coordinator for the North Carolina Baptist Men for an overview of his organization's capabilities and previous work.

Finally, Mike Patterson was recognized to brief the Committee on the work of the Salvation Army in North Carolina.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:55AM.

Senator Dan Soucek
Presiding

John Clark, Committee Clerk